

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000535

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV; USPACOM FOR FPA  
COMMERCE FOR ITA JEAN KELLY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/27/2014

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [BM](#) [NLD](#)

SUBJECT: GOB RELEASES MORE POST-DEPAYIN PRISONERS

REF: RANGOON 199

Classified By: COM Carmen M. Martinez for Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

1. (C) On April 25 the GOB released 24 more of the estimated 250 pro-democracy activists arrested across Burma in the government crackdown immediately following the May 30, 2003 attack on the National League for Democracy (NLD) convoy at Depayin. Four other NLD members, including an MP-elect, who had been arrested the week prior to the Depayin attack, were also released on April 25. Though the GOB has been releasing a handful of post-Depayin prisoners every month or so (ref) NLD sources estimate over 100 of them are still in detention.

2. (U) Since the approximately 250 activists (both NLD members and NLD supporters) were arrested on the fringes of the Depayin attack, and as they were not part of the official NLD convoy on May 30, their numbers were not included in the official NLD and UN list of 135 people arrested at Depayin. Of the "official" 135, all have been released except for Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo, who both remain under house arrest in Rangoon.

3. (C) COMMENT: Some of the newly released activists (10 from Mandalay prison and 17 from Shwebo prison) had received sentences ranging from two years or to nine years in prison for various fabricated criminal offenses. Releasing them after less than a year served may be a sign the GOB is attempting to entice the NLD to join the National Convention. The regime may be hopeful that the releases will help to remove festering reminders of the May 30 attack in advance of the May 17 opening of the National Convention. END COMMENT.  
Martinez